Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 ICA-11 IO-13 $/075~\mathrm{W}$

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R 260440Z JUN 78 FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5786 INFO SECDEF WASHDC AMEMBASSY CANBERRA AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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EO 11652: N/A TAGS: MASS, ID, NZ SUBJECT: INOUIRY REGAR

SUBJECT: INQUIRY REGARDING ROLE OF U.S. MILITARY IN

- INDONESIA
- 1. FAR LEFT-WING PRESIDENT OF WELLINGTON TRADES
 COUNCIL (PAT KELLY) TELEPHONED LABATT JUNE 22 TO ADVISE THAT HE AND THE COUNCIL WERE "REGARDING WITH
 CONCERN" A REPORT, FROM A "CONTACT" IN EAST TIMOR,
 CONCERNING ALLEGED PARTICIPATION OF "AMERICAN PILOTS"
 IN RENEWED FIGHTING IN EAST TIMOR. KELLY ELABORATED
 THAT THE "AMERICAN PILOTS" ARE REPORTEDLY FLYING
 BRONCO AIRCRAFT IN SUPPORT OF INDONESIAN GROUND FORCES.
 IN ADDITION, HE SAID FRETELIN WAS REPORTING "FIGHTING OF AMERICAN MILITARY ADVISORS ALONGSIDE INDONESIAN
 TROOPS IN THREE AREAS EAST OF DILL."
- 2. KELLY ASKED FOR AN EMBASSY RESPONSE TO THE CHARGES.
- 3. RADIO NZ CORRESPONDENT ADVISED LABATT SAME DAY THAT NZPA WIRE SERVICE WAS ALSO CARRYING THE FRETELIN ALLEGATION AND HAD BEEN ASKED BY LOCAL EAST TIMORESE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.

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LOBBYING GROUP TO BROADCAST THE REPORT. RADIO NZ REFUSED BECAUSE OF LACK OF CORROBORATION. CORRESPONDENT SIMILARLY ASKED IF EMBASSY HAD A COMMENT.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON APPROPRIATE RESPONSE, IF ANY.

5. COMMENT: NEW ZEALAND COMMUNIST AND LEFT-WING GROUPS HAVE TAKEN SOMETHING OF A PR HAMMERING IN RECENT WEEKS OVER THE SOVIET AND CUBAN MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA AND THE INTER-PARTY BITTERNESS IN INDOCHINA. IT SEEMS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT KELLY AND HIS COLLEAGUES ARE TRYING TO REGAIN A BIT OF THEIR OLD OFFENSIVE BY USING THE EAST TIMORESE ISSUE (WHICH HAS SUBSTANTIAL SYMPATHY IN NZ) TO PORTRAY THE US ONCE AGAIN AS INTERNATIONAL BAD BOYS. SELDEN

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